

JIFAN CARNAHAN
MISSOURI

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 5, 2002

COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Honorable Christine Todd Whitman
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Whitman,

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Superfund

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The Environmental Protection Agency is working to resolve lead contamination problems in Herculaneum, Missouri, in conjunction with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and the Federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. I have been closely monitoring the situation, and I am writing to urge more expedient action. I call on you to consider every means at your disposal, including a listing for the location on the Superfund priority list, to expeditiously address the human health crisis facing the citizens of this community.

The February 26, 2002, release of the results of comprehensive lead blood testing conducted on 935 Herculaneum residents confirms what we already knew: families in Herculaneum—especially those with young children—face well-documented and unacceptably high levels of risk for lead poisoning. An astounding 28% of the children tested have blood lead levels at levels known to cause adverse health effects. Further, 45% of the children tested who reside within very close proximity to the lead smelter have blood lead levels known to cause adverse health effects. These families deserve better. I am deeply troubled by the thought of parents raising children in an environment that is blatantly unsafe. Unfortunately, the affected families have few options due to rapidly declining property values.

I am skeptical of recent clean up efforts. It is counterintuitive for residents to leave their homes and disrupt their lives for professional "clean up" when it is unknown whether or not this will alleviate concerns of recontamination. More tenable solutions must be rapidly advanced. The long-term health issues will require a sustained commitment from the EPA working with state and local officials to comprehensively evaluate the problem while offering solutions that protect human health. I urge you to strongly consider listing the site on the EPA's Superfund priority list. Such action would provide federal assistance for possible relocation while providing enhanced continuity for ongoing remediation efforts.

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I am confident that you share my concern for the health of Herculaneum residents and that you will work to rapidly address this public health crisis.

Thank you in advance for your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean Carnahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning of the first name.

Jean Carnahan